

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A USB peripheral device belonging to a model line of identical peripheral devices, said peripheral device comprising:
 - a USB interface enabling connection of the peripheral device to a USB port of a host device; and
 - memory for storing a USB device identifier used by said host device to select a USB device driver to load when said peripheral device is initially connected to said USB port, said USB device identifier comprising a standard device identifier which is identical for all the peripheral devices of the model line.
2. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 1, wherein:
 - said USB port comprises a virtual communication port.
3. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 1, wherein:
 - said peripheral device comprises a printer.
4. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 3, wherein:
 - said USB port comprises a virtual printer port.
5. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 3, wherein:
 - said USB port comprises a printer name associated with said printer.
6. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 1, wherein:
 - said standard USB device identifier identifies each peripheral device in the model line to the host device as identical devices, thereby preventing device driver reinstallation and

communication port reassignment when swapping said peripheral device for another peripheral device from said model line.

7. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 1, wherein:

 said standard USB device identifier is configurable.

8. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 7, wherein:

 said standard USB device identifier for said peripheral device is configurable to allow two peripheral devices from the model line to be connected to said host device simultaneously.

9. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 7, wherein:

 said standard USB device identifier is configurable to control the communications port of the host device that said peripheral device is associated with.

10. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 7, wherein said configuration of said USB device identifier is enabled by a configuration tool.

11. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 10, wherein said configuration tool comprises a software application running on the host device.

12. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 10, wherein said configuration tool comprises a separate device capable of communicating with said peripheral device.

13. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 7, wherein:

 said peripheral device comprises a printer; and

 said USB device identifier is configured via a printer key pad.

14. (Original) A peripheral device in accordance with claim 1, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier comprises a model designation for said model line.

15. (Currently Amended) A method for enabling USB peripheral devices from a model line of peripheral devices to be interchanged at a USB port of a host device without reinstallation of a new device driver or reassignment of a new communication port, comprising:

providing each USB peripheral device from said model line with an identical standard USB device identifier for use by said host device to select a USB device driver to load when a peripheral device is initially connected to said USB port.

16. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said USB port comprises a virtual communication port.

17. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said peripheral device comprises a printer.

18. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 17, wherein:

said USB port comprises a virtual printer port.

19. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 17, wherein:

said USB port comprises a printer name associated with said printer.

20. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier identifies each peripheral device in the model line to a host device as identical devices.

21. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 15, further comprising:

enabling configuration of the standard USB device identifier.

22. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 21, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier for said peripheral device is configurable to allow two peripheral devices from the model line to be connected to said host device simultaneously.

23. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 21, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier is configurable to control the communications port of the host device that said peripheral device is associated with.

24. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 21, wherein said configuration of said USB device identifier is enabled by a configuration tool.

25. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 24, wherein said configuration tool comprises a software application running on the host device.

26. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 24, wherein said configuration tool comprises a separate device capable of communicating with said peripheral device.

27. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 21, wherein:

said peripheral device comprises a printer; and
said USB device identifier is configured via a printer key pad.

28. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier comprises a model designation for said model line.

29. (Currently amended) A method for providing a standard USB device identifier for a model line of USB peripheral devices, comprising:

providing a string of text data for use as a USB device identifier for identifying each peripheral device of said model line of peripheral devices when connected to a USB port of a

host device, such that the host device can select an appropriate USB device driver to load when a peripheral device is initially connected to said USB port, said string of text data being identical for each peripheral device in said model line; and

storing said identical string of text data in memory of each of said peripheral devices of said model line.

30. (Currently amended) A method An identifier in accordance with claim 29, wherein:
said USB port comprises a virtual communication port.

31. (Currently amended) A method An identifier in accordance with claim 29, wherein:
said peripheral device comprises a printer.

32. (Currently amended) A method An identifier in accordance with claim 31, wherein:
said USB port comprises a virtual printer port.

33. (Currently amended) A method An identifier in accordance with claim 31, wherein:
said USB port comprises a printer name associated with said printer.

34. (Currently amended) A method An identifier in accordance with claim 29, wherein:
said standard USB device identifier identifies each peripheral device in the model line to the host device as identical devices.

35. (Currently amended) A method An identifier in accordance with claim 29, wherein:
said standard USB device identifier is configurable.

36. (Currently amended) A method An identifier in accordance with claim 35, wherein:
said standard USB device identifier is configurable to allow two peripheral devices from the model line to be connected to said host device simultaneously.

37. (Currently amended) A method ~~An identifier~~ in accordance with claim 35, wherein:
said standard USB device identifier is configurable to control the communications port of
the host device that said peripheral device is associated with.
38. (Currently amended) A method ~~An identifier~~ in accordance with claim 35, wherein said
configuration of said USB device identifier is enabled by a configuration tool.
39. (Currently amended) A method ~~An identifier~~ in accordance with claim 38, wherein said
configuration tool comprises a software application running on the host device.
40. (Currently amended) A method ~~An identifier~~ in accordance with claim 38, wherein said
configuration tool comprises a separate device capable of communicating with said peripheral
device.
41. (Currently amended) A method ~~An identifier~~ in accordance with claim 35, wherein:
said peripheral device comprises a printer; and
said USB device identifier is configured via a printer key pad.
42. (Currently amended) A method ~~An identifier~~ in accordance with claim 29, wherein:
said standard USB device identifier comprises a model designation for said model line.